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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

Washington, D. C.

10 September 1947

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COUNTRY : China
SUBJECT : Attempted
Assassination of LIN Piao
DATE OF INFORMATION: 26 May 1947

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The following report will attempt a compilation of the various and often conflicting reports concerning the shooting or attempted shooting or rumors of shooting of General LIN Piao, Communist military commander of forces in Manchurian area.

information concerning the rumored assassination of LIN Piao in late March or early April

the account of the event is almost identical with that found in Changchun newspapers, though with a few additional details supplied.

On the 7th of April, 1947, at 1000 in the morning, a conference was held at Harbin between General LIN Piao, military commander of the Communists in Manchuria, and Mayor LIU Cheng-tung () of Harbin, military

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director of operations for the Sungchiang District area. Various military unit commanders were present, and a stormy conference ensued for about three hours. The main subject of argument was dissension by LIU and argument against LIN Piao's strategy in the February-March campaign against Changchun and Kirin, and the latter's plan for re-attempting such a drive. LIN reportedly had been in favor of taking both Changchun and Kirin by force no matter what the cost, for sake of prestige and for control of central Manchuria; LIU violently opposed and attacked this idea, stating that the February attack had been far too costly because of LIN's determination to do that, and that it would be far better to consolidate the Communist lines as they were, carry on guerrilla warfare, and await an eventual weakening of the Nationalist position at which time the Communist military could attack in a wide arc, seize grain and military supplies, and then retreat strategically to prepared positions. As the argument grew hotter, apparently LIU made some remark to the effect that LIN's obsession for taking Changchun even in the face of high echelon opposition was complete folly and responsible for Communist reverses in Manchuria. This insubordination apparently infuriated LIN, who drew a small caliber pistol to shoot LIU. At a sign from LIU, his bodyguard and henchman, CHANG Hsueh-Lin (28 year old younger brother of the Young Marshall, Chang Hsueh-Shih and Chang Hsueh Ming), quickly drew his own weapon, a Mauser pistol, and shot LIN in the abdomen. LIN in falling, fired at CHANG and killed him. LIU was held in custody and subsequently executed. LIN was rushed to the hospital, and died two days later on May 9th. LI Li-San started a thorough investigation of the shooting when he heard about it in Chia Mu-SSu. He was in no way implicated. There were no Korean leaders present or concerned in the shooting. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] No drinking of alcoholic beverages was in evidence as a possible stimulus to unpremeditated shooting. [redacted]

[redacted] originally claimed [redacted] that the shooting of LIN Piao occurred on 29 March in a late afternoon discussion of strategy with Harbin military leaders. [redacted] 25X1

However, he maintained that CHANG shot LIN without authorization or signal, and that the argument was quite general in nature, with several minor military leaders arguing openly with LIN and threatening him. His later version placed date of the shooting as May 8th. [redacted] 25X1

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the mid-April Changchun and Mukden news story of the death of LIN Piao might be completely without truth. It was his opinion, however, that LIN was not shot at any conference with Mayor LIU (or Mayor LIU's brother, a local military commander), nor by the youngest of the CHANG brothers. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] believed that LIN had been subjected to an assassination attempt by an unknown group of agents, and that at worst only a flesh wound had been inflicted. His opinion was that Nationalist intelligence sources were doing some wishful thinking, but circulated the story of LIN's death more for morale than because of real belief in it. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] the attempted shooting might have been the work of either Nationalist agents, or hirelings of a rival Communist clique or a Manchurian for the Manchuria group, but that proof was entirely lacking. However, it did seem evident from the extreme security measures and hushing-up policy of the Communists in Harbin that such an assassination attempt had been made, but with word of some people that LIN had re-appeared in public after a three-week "retirement", that the attempt had failed. He placed the date uncertainly as sometime about the beginning of April.

[redacted] The most that can be deduced, [redacted] from the accounts of various refugees concerning the LIN Piao incident is that it appears to be an extremely "well-founded rumor". The chief basis for belief that an assassination attempt was made is the cloak of secrecy and careful avoidance of any discussion of the event - a denial without any clearcut irrefutable proof that the news item was untrue, and attempted suppression of any attempt to clarify the situation at all. Whereas this reaction might be only natural, [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] refugees in question sensed a certain tenseness and strain on the situation, which added to "leakage" rumors, were a bit extraordinary. The most consistent rumor [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] was that the assassination attempt was a premeditated attack at a meeting between LIN and various Korean and Chinese Communist military leaders. The attack was made by several Korean leaders, who had for some time felt that LIN was a stumbling block to the plans of their clique for control in Manchuria. The reports vary between LIN dying of wounds received to LIN recovering rapidly from minor wounds sustained, and the scope of the struggle varies between a man-for-man gun fight between LIN and a "trigger man" and a full-scale brawl. However, [redacted] again the most persistent and well-founded and best-informed reports indicate that the shooting became a bit general if very brief, and that the figure of Koreans and Chinese implicated were nine and two respectively, and that all of those who had not been shot on the spot were executed immediately afterwards. [redacted] the date of the shooting is placed (by rumor) at somewhere around April 8-12, probably on the 8th. LIN supposedly recovered [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] It is interesting to note [redacted] 25X1

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that the "best-informed" rumor [redacted] also indicated Korean-Li Li-San clique control of Harbin resulting, which has been at least partially confirmed [redacted] predicted on basis of "good information" that a general Communist offensive in central Manchuria would be launched about mid-May or early June for purposes of gathering grain and equipment, especially to trade the former with the Soviets for military supplies).

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[redacted] at the period (April 6-12) most consistently mentioned as that during which the "assassination" occurred, at that time, although there were general rumors of all sorts concerning LIN's death or wounding and method of its accomplishment, no definite proof or disproof has been yet offered. [redacted]

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[redacted] later (in mid-April) that an assassination attempt had been made by Korean Communist agents because LIN had used the Koreans as "cannon fodder" and expendable shock troops during the previous campaign on Changchun, had consistently refused to co-operate with Korean military leaders, and overrode requests and orders of the Central Council at Chia Ku-San as he pleased. The assassination had reportedly failed, with LIN only wounded. Yet although Li Li-San backed up the secret investigations concerning LIN's death very firmly on the surface, he, or at least some influential member of his International Clique, was fully aware that an attempt could be made on LIN's life at Harbin. [redacted]

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